GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HOME AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3035
ANSWERED ON:14.03.2000
NEXUS BETWEEN ISI AND KHALISTANI TERRORISTS
ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY;SHYAMA SINGH

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government are aware that agents of Pakistan`s ISI in connivance with the Khalistani terrorists in Punjab have constructed a 200 meter tunnel at Indo-Pak international border;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Border Security Force posted at international border to curb the activities of ISI agents have totally failed; and

(d) if so, the steps proposed to be taken by the Government to strengthen the Border Security Force at international border ?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS

(SHRI CH. VIDYASAGAR RAO)

(a) to (d) : A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement referred to in reply to Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No.3035 due for answer on 14th March, 2000.

(a) to (d) : BSF patrol party discovered an underground tunnel near Border Out Post Chandigarg in Dera Baba Nanak Sector on 17th November, 1999. This tunnel was about 5 to 5-1/2 feet below the surface, 3 feet in diameter and 200 meters long of which 30 meters was inside the Pak territory. A joint verification of this tunnel was carried out by IG, BSF, Punjab Frontier (India) and DG, Punjab Rangers (Pakistan) on 23rd November, 1999. Subsequently, a protest was lodged by BSF with the Pak Rangers.

The area in which the tunnel was discovered is covered with thick sarkanda grass. Hence, it could not be detected immediately. However, it had not crossed the border fence on the Indian side and the other end of the mouth of the tunnel on the Indian side had not been opened. As a result of vigilance exercised by the BSF, all the three attempts since March, 1997 to dig a tunnel under the border fencing in Punjab sector were detected before any damage was done.

BSF is maintaining a strict vigil along the border to thwart such attempts in future. Steps taken include plugging of existing gaps in the riverine areas with proper/improvised fencing, conduct of surveillance operations, cleaning of sarkanda and other wild growth, upgrading the intelligence network, use of night vision devices etc.